

*Administration of Barack Obama, 2013*

**Remarks at a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee/Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Fundraiser in Beverly Hills, California**  
*November 25, 2013*

Thank you. All right, everybody. Have a seat. That's enough, that's enough. *[Laughter]*

Now, let me clarify something. First of all, there was valet parking for Cheryl. We thought it was appropriate for Haim to get some exercise. *[Laughter]* Cheryl, being the wonderful person that she is, declined the valet parking, and so she might have joined him. But I would have been happy to have her drive right up into the South Lawn. *[Laughter]*

We are so grateful for Haim and Cheryl, not just for this event, but for the extraordinary friendship and their persistent advocacy on behalf of so many issues that we all care about. And not only to Cheryl and Haim, but Tiffany and Heidi and Ness and Tanya, and Cheryl's parents and her aunt who are here, we want to say thank you for your generosity and thank you for your friendship. We are thankful.

Now, I understand Harry Reid was here, but Harry left. But I'll tell you what, although Harry may not win sort of any contest for best sound bite on CNN, if you're in a fight, you want Harry Reid in your corner. *[Laughter]* And nobody has fought harder for the American people and for working families in this country than Harry, with the possible exception of the person who has been one of the finest Speakers that we've ever had and who I intend to see Speaker once again, Nancy Pelosi.

Harry and Nancy could not do the great work that they were doing unless they had an incredible team around them. Two of the people who have, let's face it, fairly thankless jobs, but also happen to be some of the finest public servants that we have in the country—Michael Bennet, the head of the DSCC; Steve Israel leading the charge at the DCCC—we want to thank them for the great work that they are doing.

And one of my favorite people who has just been an incredible source of laughter and support for many years, including when I was in the Senate, your own Senator Barbara Boxer is here. Three outstanding Members of Congress—four, five—five outstanding Members of Congress here: Karen Bass is here—where is Karen? Judy Chu is here; Anna Eshoo is here; Brad Sherman is here; and Adam Schiff is here. And of course, you are all here. So I want to thank you for your support.

Now, I have been working on behalf of Steve Israel and Michael Bennet for quite some time now, including today. *[Laughter]* So rather than give a stock speech, what I want to do is spend most of our time in a conversation. And this is a small enough group that I'll have a chance to answer some questions and take some comments. But let me just say two things: one about domestic policy, one about foreign policy.

Over the last 5 years, thanks to the leadership of Nancy and Harry and legislators who are here, we have accomplished as much, if not more, than any time in our history: saving an economy from a great depression; revitalizing an auto industry that is producing better cars and has come roaring back like nobody believed; doubling our exports; drastically reducing our dependence on foreign oil; doubling fuel efficiency standards; doubling our production of clean energy; reducing the pace of our carbon emissions; ending the war in Iraq; about to end the war in Afghanistan, recentring our fight against terrorism in a way that respects our values and

our ideals; expanding access to college for children all across this country; ending "don't ask, don't tell," making sure that we are vindicating the notion that everybody should have a fair shot regardless of their sexual orientation, as well as their race and their gender; pushing for equal pay for women; reinstituting research for stem cells. Across the board, we've made changes that will be lasting, some of which aren't noticed, don't get a lot of headlines, but make a meaningful difference in people's lives every single day.

But I will tell you, of all those things, I am as proud as I've ever been by the work we did to make sure that in this country, if you get sick you don't go bankrupt and that you can get the health care that you need. And I think it's fair to say, I'm not happy about the fact that we didn't have a web site that worked on the day it was supposed to work. Although, it's actually starting to work pretty well now, and it's going to be working even better in the coming weeks. Here in California, though, you're seeing, despite all the glitches, thousands of people every day who are signing up, getting health care, in some cases for the very first time.

And the difference it makes in their lives is immeasurable. And the reason I wanted to make that point is that so much of what we do is measured through the prism of politics, and on any given day, the notion is that who is up and who is down and what's on cable television should drive and determine our sense of direction and sometimes even our sense of what's right and what's wrong. But when you meet a family who tells you that their kid is alive today because they got an early diagnosis because they could finally go to a doctor where they couldn't before, I don't need a poll to tell me that's the right thing to do. I don't need a headline to tell me that that vindicates a core value that I believe in and that we, as Americans, should believe in. That's a fight worth fighting; I'm proud that we fought it; and we're going to keep on fighting it.

And on foreign policy, obviously, the headlines of late have been about Iran. And let me say that when I came into office, there was a lot of bluster about Iran, but what was needed was a plan, because the fact of the matter is that Iran was moving rapidly in building its nuclear capacity. And so, with the help of Members of Congress, including the Members who are here today, we constructed the toughest set of sanctions ever. And we organized laboriously over the course of 2 years around the world cooperation not just from allies, but also in some cases from folks who were very reluctant to apply sanctions, Russia and China. And we mobilized international unity around saying Iran had to meet its international responsibilities.

And as a consequence of the strength of those sanctions and the painstaking diplomacy that we engaged in, Iran ultimately came to the table and said, we are prepared in a serious way to negotiate around our nuclear program—for the first time in over a decade.

And as a consequence of the agreement that John Kerry, who is doing a great job as Secretary of State, was able to construct, we've seen the first halt in the Iranian nuclear program in a decade; the reduction to zero of the 20-percent enriched uranium that was the biggest threat to immediate breakout capacity; unprecedented inspections, in some cases, daily inspections, into what they're doing throughout the country with their nuclear program; and the prospect that we may be able through peaceful, diplomatic means remove this cloud that has hovered over the Middle East and had the potential, and continues to have the potential, of triggering a nuclear arms race in the most volatile region of the world.

Now, that's the right thing to do. That's good for the United States; it's good for our allies; it's good for Israel. Because I've said, and I will repeat, that I don't take any options off the table as Commander in Chief when it comes to the security of the United States or our allies. And I've also said, we cannot accept Iran having a nuclear weapon. But I spend too much time

at Walter Reed—looking at kids, 22, 23, 24, 25 years old, who've paid the kind of price that very few of us in this room can imagine on behalf of our freedom—not to say I'm going to do every single thing that I can to try to resolve these issues without resorting to military conflict.

And that's what you should expect from me as President of the United States. That's what the times demand. This is not politics; these are not games. And the stakes are extraordinarily high. And we make decisions like the one we made: We don't make them based on political expedience; we don't make them on the basis of what might make a good headline today or tomorrow; but we make them on the basis of our judgment—my judgment—about what we need to do to keep America safe. It is the single, most solemn responsibility I have as President of the United States.

I make those two points simply to say this. We are at an event here because we understand that part of our democracy—part of this amazing experiment we're engaged in—is, we've got to run around and we've got to raise money and we've got to make speeches and we've got to go to rallies and we've got to get folks fired up and we've got to engage in the process. And that's a good thing; that's a healthy thing. That's what our democracy is about. But I also want everybody to remember the stakes involved in these things: that family and that kid who's sick, the people who we need to protect, the troops and their families back home.

Ultimately, this translates into real-life consequences. And I say that so that all of you recognize you are involved in a very important enterprise, one that is passed on from generation to generation, where we have an obligation to do the same thing that our parents and our grandparents and our great-grandparents did, which is to chip away at what sometimes seem like intractable problems, but because of that persistence and that effort and that seriousness of purpose and a willingness to stay true to our values, no matter how tough the problem is, we usually come out better on the other side. And I expect no less of this generation.

But sometimes, it's bumpy, and sometimes, it's hard, and sometimes, there are setbacks. And that's okay because it's worth it. And I hope that's why you're here today, because I know that I can't do it without all of you.

All right. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:16 p.m. at the residence of Haim and Cheryl L. Saban. In his remarks, he referred to Tiffany Lenhart and Heidi N. Lenhart, daughters of Mrs. Saban; and Ness Saban, son, and Tanya Saban, daughter, of Mr. and Mrs. Saban. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 26. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

*Categories:* Addresses and Remarks : Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee fundraisers :: Beverly Hills, CA; Addresses and Remarks : Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee fundraisers :: Beverly Hills, CA.

*Locations:* Beverly Hills, CA.

*Names:* Bass, Karen R.; Bennet, Michael F.; Boxer, Barbara L.; Chu, Judy M.; Eshoo, Anna G.; Israel, Steven J.; Kerry, John F.; Lenhart, Heidi N.; Lenhart, Tiffany; Pelosi, Nancy; Reid, Harry M.; Saban, Cheryl L.; Saban, Haim; Saban, Ness; Saban, Tanya; Schiff, Adam B.; Sherman, Bradley J.

*Subjects:* Armed Forces, U.S. : Servicemembers :: Casualties; California : Democratic Party events; California : President's visits; Congress : House of Representatives :: Minority leader; Congress : Senate :: Majority leader; Democratic Party : Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; Democratic Party : Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee; Elections : 2014 congressional elections; Health and medical care : Health insurance exchanges; Health and medical care : Health insurance reforms; Health and medical care : Insurance coverage and access to providers; Iran : International and U.S. sanctions; Iran : International diplomatic efforts; Iran : Nuclear weapons development; State, Department of : Secretary.

*DCPD Number:* DCPD201300809.